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W. W. HANSEN LABORATORY OF PHYSICS
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

MICROWAVE LABORATORY
HIGH ENERGY PHYSICS LABORATORY
BIOPHYSICS LABORATORY

DA report J-1445

May 25, 1960

Mr. Ernest C. Pollard
Biophysics Department
Box 2166, Yale Station
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Ernie:

Joshua Lederberg has shown me your letter of May 2 regarding the fortunes of our accelerator proposal. We are certainly very grateful to you for your interest and efforts on our behalf. Moreover, we feel that your analysis of how the situation evolved is very sound. I would like to dissent, however, from the implications of the following paragraph:

"The opinion that I had from quite well advised party quarters was that the three million dollar advance for the first year's work is probably all that could be spent anyway and would put them definitely well along in the actual process of getting the accelerator going."

Events may have advanced to the point that the question involved will not be discussed again. However, if it should be discussed we feel that people in your position should know that we feel the partial authorization has been a substantial mistake. This is because it has severely prejudiced our ability to acquire the quality staff which is so essential. Thus it is not primarily a matter of dollars -- three million is a lot of money and nearly as much as we would have spent in the first year had the authorization been for the total of one hundred and seven million. But not only have we had difficulty in hiring -- we have had difficulty in holding some of the staff already in place. The problem is one which we and others anticipated if partial authorization was our fate. For example, at the Joint Committee Hearings July 14-15, 1959, various statements were made in this regard by both Stanford and non-Stanford representatives. Henry DeWolf Smyth covered the subject very well, I think, with the following:

"I feel very strongly, Mr. Price, that the full amount should be authorized at this time. This is a point that I did not cover in my statement, but as I said at the beginning of my testimony, I do want to talk about it. I have had some experience in the past with situations where preliminary design was authorized or research was authorized on a project, and then there was a long delay before further authorization came through. This is extremely demoralizing. It makes it

May 25, 1960

difficult to assemble a staff, and once the staff is assembled, and then there is delay in further authorization, the staff disappears and it becomes extremely difficult to reassemble the staff. In this case particularly, where the design is so fully worked out in the sense of depending on components that are already in use, and where, as I understand it, a machine could be built that would be very useful even without further development of the components. I think it would be very undesirable to give partial authorization. It seems to me that partial authorization or authorization for design or research studies is appropriate when you are not sure whether the thing is going to work, and you want to have another look at it. In this case I don't believe there is any doubt about the probability of the machine working. The only doubt is how well it will work and whether research can make it work better."

We can, of course, do some things to mitigate the effect of partial authorization. We expect to be able to obtain the services of some people who we cannot hire under these circumstances by utilizing contracts with their employers or asking them to take leaves of absence. But such arrangements will not fully compensate for the problems. The disadvantage is therefore serious, particularly so because the work which will be done in the next few months will inevitably affect very basically the character and quality of the finished project.

Another aspect of the current difficulty is the fact that under the present partial authorization construction activities are prohibited. This implies that we cannot go ahead with construction of those laboratories which would be needed for the full program during the second year of activity of the project. Facilities available to the project now are extremely limited and this will become a major difficulty later.

Lastly, one of the publicly stated reasons for delaying the project is that the cost information is still unreliable and that under the auspices of the proposed preliminary program, better estimates will be derived. In fact, with the usual process of contracting, the funds under the proposed program will not be available to Stanford until late in the summer; yet, by December 1, Congress expects us to have enough new cost information to make a real difference in its accuracy. In fact, after a few month's work there will not be enough new information to make a substantially different picture. Many months of work have gone into this proposal to date, and not until a complete engineering job is done will it be possible to fix costs more accurately. Thus, most of the cost information upon which Congress can act in January is available at the present time.

Robert L. Pollard

- 3 -

May 2

Let me repeat my thanks for your interest and support. Should you require further information in the future we shall be very happy to provide it.

Sincerely,

E. L. Ginzton

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